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Choice Literature.

JENNY LAWSON, OR, LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

BY KATE SUTHERLAND.

CHAPTER ii.

It was impossible for such passionate interviews, brief though they were, to take place without leaving on the heart of a simple minded girl like Jenny Lawson, a deep impression. New impulses were given to her feelings, and a new direction to her thoughts. Nature told her that Mark Clifford loved her; and nothing but his cold disavowal of the fact could possibly have affected this belief. He had met her, it was true, only three or four times; but their interviews during these meetings had been of a character to leave no ordinary effect behind.—So long as her eyes, dimmed by overflowing tears, could follow Mark's retiring form, she gazed eagerly after him; and when he was at length hidden from her view, she sat down to pour out her heart in passionate weeping.

Old Mrs. Lee, while she tenderly loved the sweet flower that had grown up under her care, was not, in all things, a wise and discreet woman; nor deeply versed in the workings of the human heart.

Rumor of Mark's wildness had found its way to the neighborhood of Fairview, and made an unfavorable impression.—Mrs. Lee firmly believed that he was moving with swift feet in the way to destruction, and rolling evil under his tongue as a sweet morsel. When she heard of his arrival at his grandfather's a fear came upon her lest he should cast his eyes upon Jenny. No wonder that she met the young man with such a quick repulse when, to her alarm, she found that he had invaded her home, and was already charming the ear of the innocent child she so tenderly loved and cared for. To find them sitting alone in the woods, only a little while afterwards, almost maddened her; and so soon as she took Jenny home, she hurried over to Mr. Lofton, and in a confused, exaggerated, and intemperate manner, complained of the conduct of Mark.

'Together alone in the woods!' exclaimed the old gentleman, greatly excited. 'What does the girl mean?'

'What does he mean, thus to entice away my innocent child?' said Mrs. Lee, equally excited. 'Oh, Mr. Lofton! for goodness' sake, send him back to New York! If he remain here a day longer, all may be lost! Jenny is bewitched with him. She cried as if her heart would break when I took her back home, and said that I had done wrong to Mark in what I had said to him.'

'Weak and foolish child! How little does she know of the world—how little of the subtle human heart! Yes—yes, Mrs. Lee, Mark shall go back at once.—He shall not remain here a day longer, to breathe his blighting breath on so sweet a flower. Jenny is too good a girl to be exposed to such an influence.'

The mind of Mr. Lofton remained excited for hours after this interview; and when Mark appeared, he met him as has already been seen. The manner in which the young man received the angry words of his grandfather, was a little different from what had been anticipated. Mr. Lofton expected some explanation by which he could understand more clearly what was in the young man's thoughts. When, therefore, Mark abruptly turned from him with such strange language on his tongue, Mr. Lofton's anger cooled, and he felt that he had suffered himself to be misled by a hasty judgment. That no evil had been in the young man's mind he was sure. It was this change that had prompted him to make an effort to recall him. But the effort was fruitless.

On Jenny's return home, after her last interview with Mark, she found a servant there with a summons from Mr. Lofton. With reluctance she repaired to the mansion house. On meeting with the old gentleman he received her in a kind but subdued manner; but, as for Jenny herself, she stood in his presence weeping and trembling.

'Jenny,' said Mr. Lofton, after the girl had grown more composed, 'when did you first meet my grandson?'

Jenny mentioned the accidental meeting on the day before, and the call at the cottage in the morning.

'And you saw him first only yesterday?'

'Yes.'

'What did he say when he called this morning?'

'He asked for my mother.'

'Your mother?'

'Yes. I told him that my mother was dead, and that I lived with Mrs. Lee.—He then wanted to see her; but I said that she had gone over to your house.'

'What did he say then?'

'He spoke of you, and said you were a good man, and that we no doubt found you a good landlord. I had mentioned that you owned our cottage.'

Mr. Lofton appeared affected at this.

'What then?' he continued.

'He told me who he was, and then asked me my name. When I told him that it was Jenny, he said it was a good name, and that he always liked the sound of it, for his mother's name was Jenny. Then he asked me if I had known his mother, and when I said yes, he wanted to know if I loved her. I said yes—for you know we all loved her. Then he covered his face with his hands, and I saw the tears coming through his fingers. 'Because you knew my mother, and loved her, Jenny,' said he, 'we will be friends.' Afterwards he asked me a great many questions about her, and listened with the tears in his eyes, when I told him of many things she had said and done the last time she was up here. We were talking together about his mother, when Mrs. Lee came in. She spoke cross to him, and threatened to complain to you, if he came there any more. He went away angry. But I'm sure he meant nothing wrong, sir. How could he, and talk as he did about his mother in heaven?'

'But, how came you to meet him in the woods, Jenny?' said Mr. Lofton.—'Did he tell you that he would wait there for you?'

'Oh, no sir. The meeting was accidental. I was sent over to Mrs. Jasper's on an errand, and in passing through the woods, saw him sitting alone and looking very unhappy. I was frightened; but he told me that he would'nt hurt a hair of my head. Then he made me sit down upon the grass beside him, and talk to him about his mother. He asked me a great many questions, and I told him all that I could remember about her. sometimes the tears would steal over his cheeks; and sometimes he would say—Ah! if my mother had not died. Her death was a great loss to me, Jenny—a great loss—and I have been worse for it.'

'And was this all you talked about, Jenny.' asked Mr. Lofton, who was much affected by the artless narrative of the girl.

'It was all about his mother,' replied Jenny. I looked like her, and that it seemed to him, while with me, that she was present.'

'He said that, did he!' Mr. Lofton spoke more earnestly, and looked intently upon Jenny's face. 'Yes—yes—it is so. She does look like dear Jenny,' he murmured to himself. 'I never saw this before. Dear boy! We have done him wrong. These hastly conclusions—ah, me! To how much evil do they lead.'

'And you were talking thus, when Mrs. Lee found you?'

'Yes, sir.'

'What did she say?'

'I can hardly tell what she said, I was so frightened. But I know she spoke angrily to him and to me, and threatened to see you.'

Mr. Lofton sighed deeply, then added as if the remark were casual—

'And that is the last you have seen of him.'

'No, sir; I met him a little while ago, as he was hurrying away from you,house.'

'You did?' Mr. Lofton started at Jenny's unexpected reply.

'Yes, sir.'

'Did he speak to you?'

'Yes; he stopped and caught hold of my hand, saying, 'God bless you Jenny! We may never meet again. They have driven me away, because they thought I meant to harm you. But he said nothing wrong was in his heart, and asked me to pray for him, as he would need my prayers.'

At this part of her narrative, Jenny wept bitterly, and her auditor's eyes became dim also.

Satisfied that Jenny's story was true in every particular, Mr. Lofton spoke kindly to her and sent her home.

A week after Mark Clifford left Fairview, word came that he had enlisted in the United States' service and gone to sea as a common sailor; accompanying this intelligence was an indignant avowal of his father that he would have nothing more to do with him. To old Mr. Lofton this was a serious blow. In Mark he had hoped to see realized some of his ambitious desires. His daughter Jenny had been happy in her marriage, but the union never gave him much satisfaction. She was to have been the wife of one more distinguished than a mere plodding money making merchant.

Painful was the shock that accompanied the prostration of Mr. Lofton's ambitious hopes touching his grandson, of whom he had always been exceedingly fond. To him he had intended leaving the bulk of his property when he died.—But now anger and resentment arose in his mind against him as unworthy such a preference, and in the warmth of the moment's impulse, he corrected his will and cut him off with a dollar. This was no sooner done than better emotions stirred in the old man's bosom, and he regretted the hasty act; but pride of consistency prevented his recalling it.

From that time old Mr. Lofton broke down rapidly. In six months he seemed to have added ten years to his life.—During that period no news had come from Mark; who was not only angry with both his father and grandfather, but felt that in doing what he had done, he had offended them beyond the hope of forgiveness. He, therefore, having taken a rash step, moved on in the way he had chosen, in a spirit of recklessness and defiance. The ties of blood which had bound him to his home were broken, the world was all before him, and he must make his way in it alone. The life of a common sailor in a government ship he found to be something different from what he had imagined, when, acting under a momentary excitement, he was so mad as to enlist in the service.—Unused to work or ready obedience, he soon discovered that his life was to be one not only of bodily toil, pushed sometimes to the extreme of fatigue, but one of the most perfect subordination to the will of others, under pain of corporeal punishment. The first insolent word of authority passed to him by a new fledged midshipman, his junior by at least three years, stung him so deeply that it was only by a most violent effort that he could master the impulse that prompted him to seize and throw him overboard. He did not regret this successful effort as self-control, when, a few hours afterwards, he was compelled to witness the punishment of the cat inflicted on a sailor for the offence of insolence to an officer. The sight of a poor man, writhing under the brutality of the lash, made an impression on him that nothing could efface. It absorbed his mind, and brought it into a healthier state of reflection than it had yet been.

'I have placed myself in this position by a rash act,' he said to himself, as he turned, sick at heart, away from the painful and disgusting sight. 'And all rebellion [illegible] will but make plainer my own weakness. I have degraded myself; but there is a lower degradation still, and that I must avoid. Drag me to the gangway and I am lost!'

Strict obedience and submission was from that time self-compelled on the part of Mark Clifford. It was not without a strong effort, however, that he kept down the fiery spirit within him.—A word of insolent command—and certain of the young midshipmen on board could not speak to a sailor even if he were old as their father, except in a tone of insult—would send the blood boiling through his veins.

It was only by the narrowest chances that Mark escaped punishment during the first six months of the cruise, which was in the Pacific. It he succeeded in bridling his tongue, and restraining his hands from violence, he could not hide the indignant flash of his eyes, nor school the muscles of his face into submission. They revealed the wild spirit of rebellion that was in his heart. Intelligent promptness in duty saved him. This was seen by his superior officers, and it was so much in his favor when complaints came from the petty tyrants of the ship who sometimes shrunk from the fierce glance, that, in a moment of struggling passion, would be cast upon them. After a trying ordeal of six months, he was favored by one of the officers who saw deeper than the rest, and gathered from him a few hints as to his true character. In pitying him, he made use of his influence to save him from some of the worst consequences of his position.

Jenny Lawson was a changed girl after her brief meeting with Mark Clifford.

Before, she had been as light hearted and as gay as a bird. But, her voice was no longer heard pouring forth the sweet melodies born of a happy heart.—Much of her time she sought to be alone, and when alone, she usually sat in a state of dreamy, absent mindedness. As for her thoughts, they were, most of the time, on Clifford. His hand had stirred the waters of affection in her gentle bosom; and they knew no rest. Mr. Lofton frequently sent for her to come over to the mansion house. He never spoke to her of Mark; nor did she mention his name though both thought of him whenever they were together. The oftener Mr. Lofton saw Jenny, and the more he was with her, the more did she remind him of his own lost child—his Jenny, the mother of Mark—now in heaven. The incident of meeting with young Clifford had helped to develop Jenny's character, and give it a stronger type than otherwise would have been the case. Thus, she became to Mr. Lofton companionable; and, ere a year had elapsed from the time Mark went away, Mrs. Lee, having passed to her account, she was taken into his house, and he had her constantly with him. As he continued to fail, he leaned upon the affectionate girl more and more heavily; and was never contented when she was away from him.—

It would be difficult to represent clearly Jenny's state of feeling during this period. A simple minded, innocent, true-hearted girl, in whose bosom scarce beat a single selfish impulse, she found herself suddenly approached by one in station far above her, in a way that left her heart unguarded. He had stooped to her, and leaned upon her, and she, obeying an impulse of her nature, had stood firmer to support him as he leaned. Their tender, confiding, and delightful inter[illegible]ued only for a brief seaso[illegible] then rudely broken in upon; forced separation was followed by painful consequances to the young man. When Jenny thought of how Mark had been driven away on her account, she felt that in order to save him from the evils that must be impending over him, she would devote even her life in his service. But, what could she do? This desire to serve him had also another origin. A deep feeling of love had been awakened; and, though she felt it to be hopeless, she kept the flame brightly burning.

Intenser feelings produced more active thoughts, and the mind of Jenny took a higher development. A constant association with Mr. Lofton, who required her to read to him sometimes for hours each day, filled her thoughts with higher ideas than any she had known, and gradually widened the sphere of her intelligence. Thus she grew more and more companionable to the old man, who, in turn,perceiving that the mind was expanding, took pains to give it a right direction so far as eternal knowledges were concerned.

Soon after Mark went to sea, Jenny took pains to inform herself accurately as to the position and duties of a common sailor on board of a United States vessel. She was more troubled about Mark after this, for she understood how unfitted he was for the hard service he entered upon so blindly.

One day, it was over a year from the time that Mark left Fairview, Mr. Lofton sent for Jenny, and, on her coming into his room, handed her a sealed letter but without making any remark. On it was superscribed her name; and it bore, besides, the word 'Ship' in red printed [illegible] upon it. Jenny looked at the letter wonderingly, for a moment or two, and then with her heart throbbing wildly, left the room. On breaking the seal, she found the letter to be from Mark. It was as follows:—

"U. S. SHIP——,
Valparaiaso, September 4, 18—,

'MY GENTLE FRIEND.—A year has passed since our brief meeting and unhappy parting. I do not think you have forgotton me in that time; you may be sure I have not forgotten you. The memory of one about whom we conversed, alone would keep your image green in my thoughts. Of the rash step I took, you have no doubt heard. In anger at unjust treatment both from my father and grandfather, I was weak enough to enter the United States' service as a sailor.—Having committed this folly, and being unwilling to humble myself, and appeal to friends who had wronged me for their interest to get me released, I have looked the hardship and degradation before me in the face, and sought to encounter it manfully. The ordeal has been thus far most severe, and I have yet two years of trial before me. As I am where I am by my own act, I will not complain, and yet, I have felt it hard to be cut off from all the sympathy and kind interest of my friends—to have no word from home—to feel that none cares for me. I know that I have offended both my father and grandfather past forgiveness, and my mind is made up to seek for no reconciliation with them. I cannot stoop to that. I have too much of the blood of the Loftons in my veins.

'But, why write this to you Jenny?—You will hardly understand how such feelings can govern any heart—your own is so gentle and innocent in all of its impulses. I have other things to say to you! Since our meeting I have never ceased to think of you. I need no picture of your face, for I see it ever before me as distinctly as if sketched by the painter's art. I sometimes ask myself wonderingly, how it is that you, a simple country maiden, could, in one or two brief meetings, have made so strong an impression upon me? But, you bore my mother's name, and your face was like her dear face. Moreover, the beauty of goodness was in your countenance, and a sphere of innocence around you; and I had not strayed so far from virtue's paths as to be insensible to these. Since we parted, Jenny, you have seemed ever present with me, as an angel of peace and protection. In the moment, when passion was about overmastening me, you stood by my side, and I seemed to hear your voice speaking to the rising storm and hushing all into calmness. When my feet have been ready to step aside, you instantly approached and pointed to the better way. Last night I had a dream, and it is because of that dream that I now write to you; I have often felt like writing before; now I write because I cannot help it. I am moved to do so by something that I cannot resist.

'Yesterday I had a difficulty with an officer who has shown a disposition to domineer over me ever since the cruise commenced. He complained to the commander, who has, on more than one instance shown me kindness. The commander said that I must make certain concessions to the officer, which I felt as humiliating; that good discipline required this, and that unless I did so, he would be reluctantly compelled to order me to the gangway. Thus far I had avoided punishment by a strict obedience to duty. No lash had ever touched me. That degradation I felt would be my ruin; and in fear of the result I bore much, rather than give any [illegible] the power to have me punished. 'Let me s[illegible] I, so earnestly that my request was granted.

'Troubled dreams haunted me as I lay in my hammock that night. At last I seemed to be afloat on the wide ocean, on a single plank, tossing about with the hot sun shining fiercely upon me, and monsters of the great deep gathering around, eager for their prey. I was weak, faint, and despairing. In vain did my eyes sweep the horizon, there was neither vessel nor land in sight. At length the sun went down, and the darkness drew nearer and nearer. Then I could see nothing but the stars shining above me. In this moment, when hope seemed about leaving my heart forever, a light came suddenly around me. On looking up I saw a boat approaching. In the bow stood my mother, and you sat guiding the helm! She took my hand, and I stepped in the boat with a thrill of joy at my deliverance. As I did so, she kissed me, looked tenderly towards you, and faded from my sight. Then I awoke.

'The effect of all this was to subdue my haughty spirit. As soon as an opportunity offered, I made every desired concession for my fault, and was forgiven. And now I am writing to you, I feel as if there was something in that dream, Jenny. Ah! Shall I ever see your face again? Heaven only knows!

'I send this letter to you in care of my grandfather. I know that he will not retain it or seek to know its contents. Unless he should ask after me, do not speak to him or any one or what I have written to you. Farewell! Do not forget me in your prayers.

MARK CLIFFORD.'

[*To be continued.*]

Original Papers.

Written for the Spirit of the Age.

GEORGE DICKSON'S ADVENTURES.

In the State of N. C., C—— county, there is a small collection of houses dignified by the name of village. This village is named after one of the greatest cities of Europe, but does not entertain the most remote hope of attaining to the size and grandeur of the town from which it takes its name. It contain within its limits a church, of the denomination of "Hardsides," a sect noted for the learning of its ministers, the purity and intelligence of its members generally, and the strictness with which they shun even the appearance of evil—with many other excellencies which are its distinguishing features.

Among many other members, was a young gentleman named George Dickson, a most exemplary young man of 25 years of age, who fancied he had had a call from on high to preach the gospel—though some person, who was not as friendly to that church as perhaps he ought to have been, had the audacity to show his skepticism on the subject by giving it as his opinion that somebody else was called, and George Dickson answered. Be this as it may, I shall not attempt to decide the point—but whether he was called or not, he obeyed the summons; and his zeal for the church was only surpassed by his love for rum; a circumstance of so rare an occurrence, that I will give the reader the information—for "thereby hangs a tale."

George was a man of tolerably good appearance; a red face, and tolerably ready witted, though his knowledge of things in general was rather limited. He was entirely unacquainted with that tender emotion for the softer sex, or weaker vessels, as he termed the ladies in his sermons, until about three weeks prior to the commencement of my story, at which time he saw Miss Adaline C—, at Church, when he became a complete enamorado; but how to make a start at the fair object of his admiration puzzled him not a little. After revolving the thing in his mind he came to the conclusion that he would seek an introduction at the hands of Miss Adaline's cousin, a Mr. John J——. Accordingly an arrangement was made between them. Mr. J. obtained the consent of cousin Adaline to introduce our friend, and on the appointed day the two went to Mrs. C.'s residence, and found Adaline at home and even more charming than she appeared at church. I formally introduced them, and shortly after left them, to join David C, who was fishing in a creek near the house. Now our friend was not to be scared at trifles, but I must say that his heart fluttered very much when left alone with Miss Adaline. He soon recovered his self-possession, however, for with wonderful presence of mind he cleared up his throat and remarked—"This is very dry weather."

To which remarkable observation, Miss Adaline replied, "very dry, very dry indeed."

A short pause ensued, but George again said, 'if it does not rain shortly, crops are bound to suffer.' To which astounding information, Adaline responded very appropriately. To this succeeded another pause, which Adaline thought prolonged to a very awkward length. She therefore to keep up the conversation asked 'are you fond of novels, Mr. Dickson?' 'I don't know, I never eat any,' he replied.

Adaline came very near laughing at George's answer, but as if not noticing his mistake, she asked: 'have you rea[d] Alamance?' 'No, not that I remem[ber]; I seldom read anything but th[e] Primitive Baptist,' the Bible an[d th]e Psalm book. Oh! then you ha[ve] never read 'Ten Thousand a [illegible] 'Lord bless my life, no; I never read [illegible] nor the half of it;' excla[illegible] [illegible] 'It takes a[illegible] time to read my Bible.' [illegible] you are very conversant with that [illegible] ed book,' said Adaline, glad to have struck upon some subject that would perhaps be interesting to him.

'Yes,' said George, who now found himself perfectly at home, on the subject of divinity—and he squared himself for the purpose of giving Miss Adaline a specimen of his wonderful attainments. 'I have read in that blessed book, of our first father and our first mother, that was placed in Paradise; this Paradise was what they called a garden, but we'd call it a orchard. There was a great many fruit trees in it; the best apples that ever grow'd in the world growed there, great big horse-apples as big as your two fists and yaller as gold; then there was a great many sorts of peaches, more than I can tell you of, but the best of 'em all was the big yaller minnis peach. I don't know whether Adam made much cider or not, I don't think the Bible says, but I'll be bound he had a plenty of it and brandy too. Well, off at the side of the orchard was a piece of cleared ground, where Adam had his 'taters and cotton planted—now the Lord told Adam and Eve, says he to them, here is a heap of fruit, there isn't a man in the world got a better orchard than this is. I'll tell you what you may do: you may eat as much fruit as you please, so you don't take none off of that tree that stands in the middle of the orchard. You must not eat of that, for if you do, it will kill you; its rank pizen, says he. Now the devil was a cunning old rogue, so he changed himself into a sarpent, and twisted himself round a peach tree, and when Eve come by the tree, the sarpent showed her what purty big red apples they was, and asked her to eat some. Eve was the weaker vessel, so all other wimmin is, so she took some of the fruit and eat it. Now I ask, did Eve act like a prudent woman, did she seem like she had much sense? No, she didn't. If it had a' been me, I'll tell you how I'd a done: I'd a jumped on my horse and galloped to the nearest store, and got one of Collins's best axes and I d a chopped the sarpent's head off.

At his interesting part of the preacher's discourse, Adaline, whose gravity had been put to the severest test from the first, could bear up no longer; she therefore had a very violent fit of coughing which compelled her to keep her handkerchief to hide her convulsions, and when she did remove it, her face was rosy indeed.

Dinner was now announced, to which our friend did ample justice; he was too much of a philosopher to allow affairs of the heart to interfere with the affairs of the stomach. After dinner was over, our two friends who had been fishing in the morning,having occasion to go to Mr. Walton's Store, about half a mile off, politely invited George to go with them, to which he readily assented. So they started for the store, and directly after their arrival at that place the preacher bought a quart of rot-gut whiskey to treat his companions on; but to his infinite astonishment they both refused to drink, merely because they were Sons of Temperance. So you are both Sons of Temperance, is ye? says the preacher; now let's have a argiment on the subject. Have ye got any orthorty frum the Bible for being Sons ov Temperance? which interrogation he thought of itself so potent as to silence effectually any argument that might be brought forth by any member of the Order.

David Curtis answered, we have abundant scripture for it; there is a passage something like this,'wine is a mocker strong drink is raging, and whoso is deceived thereby is not wise.'

'Yes,' says the preacher, 'that is wine; now show me where the bible forbids a man drinking brandy, whiskey, rum or gin, and I'll give up.'

'No drunkard hath eternal life,' says David, in reply. 'Well but that is not pinting out where it says whiskey is not to be used. I know as well as you, that wine is forbidden, and that's the reason why I never drink it, but show me where whiskey is forbidden.'

Then you seem not to be aware that alcoholic liquors were not discovered until about the seventh century, nor brought into general use until about the 13th century. At the time the Bible was written, wine was the intoxicating beverage; alcoholic liquors were not known, and for this reason the sacred writers speak of wine and not of distilled spirits, said David. 'And where do you get